

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-43 canceled.

44. (currently amended) A method of fabricating a ferromagnetic plate for a magnetic resonance scanner magnet frame comprising the steps of:

(a) cutting a starting plate having oppositely directed major surfaces and a thickness between such surfaces into strips, each of said cut strips having a width greater than the thickness of the starting plate and equal to ~~the~~ a thickness of the ferromagnetic plate to be fabricated, whereby each of the cut strips have ~~substantially smooth~~ faces which originally constituted parts of the major surfaces of the starting plate; and

(b) stacking the strips to form the ferromagnetic plate so that the faces of the strips abut one another; and

(c) forming at least a portion of the magnetic resonance scanner magnet frame with the ferromagnetic plate.

45. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein said cutting step further comprises cutting the starting plate into strips having a width of approximately 13 or more inches.

46. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein said cutting step comprises cutting a starting plate having a thickness of approximately 9 or more inches.

47. (new) The method of claim 44 further comprising permanently joining said stacked strips together using fasteners.

48. (new) The method of claim 44 further comprising welding said stacked strips together.

49. (new) The method of claim 44 wherein said stacking step further comprises orienting the strips such that flux passing between the strips is minimal.

50. (new) The method of claim 49 wherein orienting comprises arranging the strips such that each strip includes a long axis that extends along a direction parallel to the ferromagnetic plate's magnetic flux lines.

51. (new) A method for fabricating a composite plate for a magnetic resonance imaging magnet comprising:

cutting a starting plate having oppositely-directed major surfaces into a plurality of strips, each of the strips having a width approximately greater than 9 inches and faces which originally constituted parts of the major surfaces of the starting plate; and

positioning the strips to form the composite plate such that the width of each of the strips is equal to a thickness of the composite plate and the faces of the strips confront one another.

52. (new) The method of claim 51 further comprising cutting the starting plate to form strips having a width of approximately 13 inches.

53. (new) The method of claim 51 further comprising permanently joining said positioned strips together using fasteners.

54. (new) The method of claim 51 further comprising welding said positioned strips together.

55. (new) The method of claim 51 wherein positioning further comprises orienting the strips such that flux passing between the strips is minimal.

56. (new) The method of claim 55 wherein orienting comprises arranging the strips such that each strip includes a long axis that extends along a direction parallel to a predominant direction of the magnetic flux lines within the composite plates.

57. (new) The method of claim 56 further comprising assembling the composite plates to form a pole support of the magnetic resonance imaging magnet such that the long axes of the strips extend between connecting elements of the pole support.

58. (new) The method of claim 56 further comprising assembling the composite plates to form a connecting element of the magnetic resonance imaging magnet such that the long axes of the strips extend between pole supports of the connecting element.